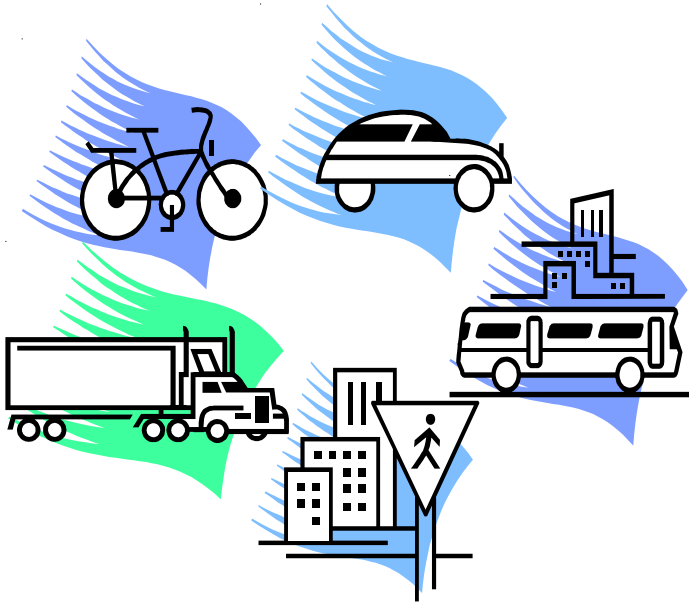


Moving Forward: A Citizen's Guide to Transportation Planning and Resources in the Bloomington, IN Urban Area



July 2003

Prepared by:
Bloomington/Monroe County Metropolitan Planning Organization
Bloomington, Indiana

Introduction

This guide was developed to familiarize citizens with the activities of the Bloomington/Monroe County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and to outline the transportation planning process for the Bloomington urban area.

It provides details on the MPO's public outreach program and information on how you can become involved. As a citizen of the Bloomington Metro area, you are an essential part of the transportation planning process. Page 8 lists some of the ways you can become involved in the Citizen's Advisory Committee and other aspects of the transportation planning process.

The Bloomington/Monroe County MPO Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC) hopes that this booklet will inform you about the planning activities of the MPO and encourages your participation in the planning process.



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Metropolitan Planning Organizations

What is a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)?

A Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is an organization formed to assist in the coordination of regional transportation planning. As a condition for spending federal highway or transit funds, Federal law requires the establishment of “metropolitan planning organizations” for urban areas with a population greater than 50,000.

As Bloomington and its surrounding areas have expanded, the transportation needs of the area have grown as well. The Bloomington/Monroe County urban area presently covers 62 square miles and includes some of Monroe County, the City of Bloomington and the Town of Ellettsville.

Bringing together transportation agencies, municipalities, and the state, the Bloomington/Monroe County MPO was created in 1982 when the Governor of the State of Indiana designated the City of Bloomington Plan Commission as the MPO for the Bloomington Urban area. The Bloomington/Monroe County MPO is responsible for developing both short and long range transportation plans for the area, and for budgeting the area’s federal transportation funds.

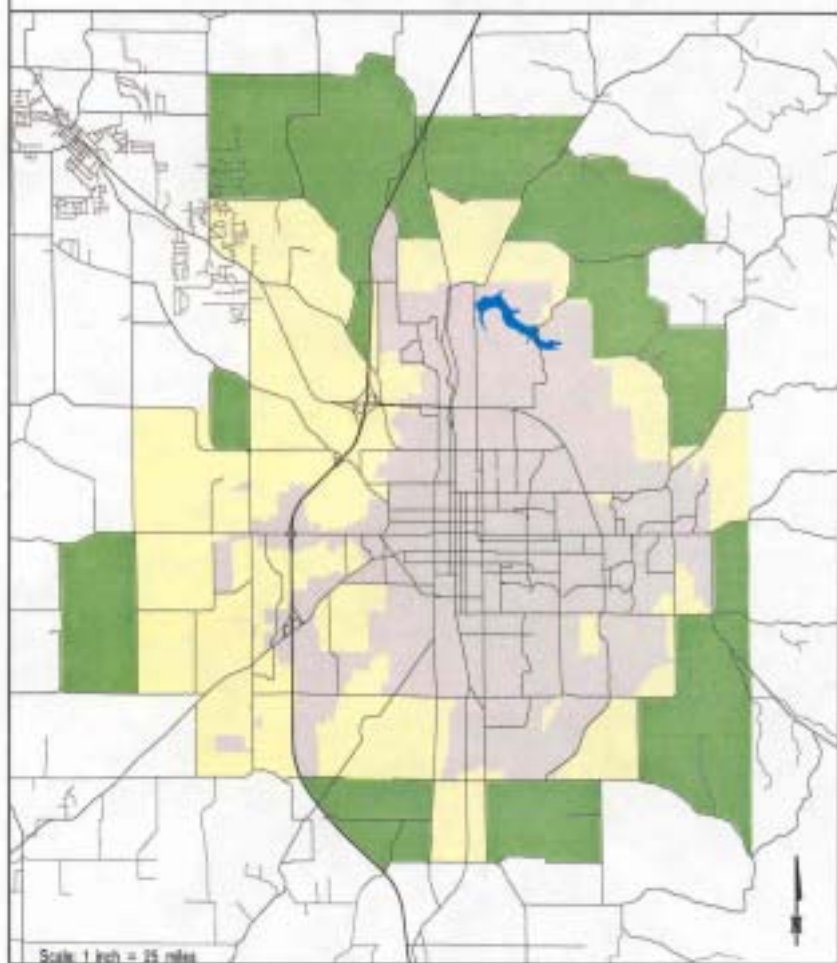
What Partners Does the MPO Work With?



The MPO works with representatives from a broad spectrum of organizations and associations from within the urban area. These are some of the organizations involved in the Policy, Technical Advisory, and Citizen’s Advisory committees (CAC):

- Bloomington City Council
- Bloomington Transit (BT)
- Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT)
- Indiana University
- Monroe County Council
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- Bloomington Bicycle/Pedestrian Safety Commission
- Bloomington Environmental Commission
- Various neighborhood associations

Bloomington MPO Area






Scale: 1 inch = 25 miles

April 11, 2003



City of Bloomington
Planning Department

-  MPO Study Area
-  Urbanized Area
-  City Limits

Traff

How is the Bloomington/Monroe County MPO Structured?

The City of Bloomington Planning Department provides staff support for the decision making body for the MPO, which is composed of three steering committees:

Policy:

Discusses and approves MPO policy. Made up of local elected and appointed officials from area municipalities, Indiana University, and state/federal transportation agencies.

Technical Advisory:

Provides technical advice to the Policy Committee on MPO projects and programs. Made up of area planners and engineers, transit managers, and representatives from the city public works department.

Citizen's Advisory:

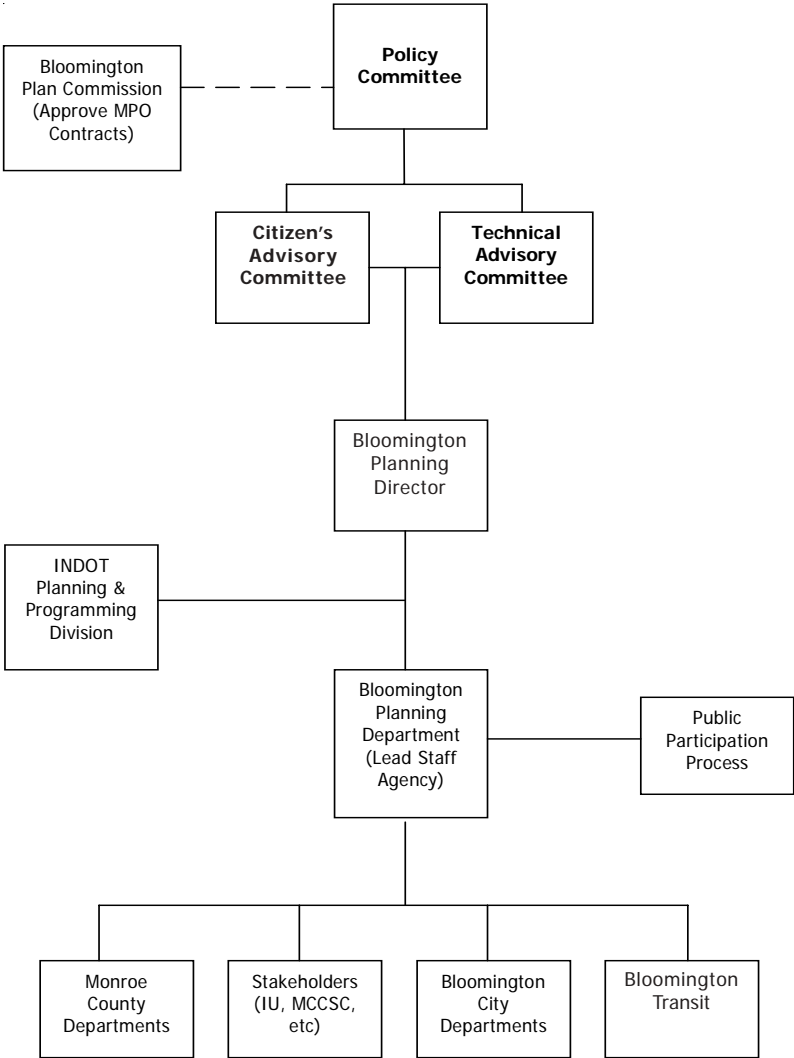
A volunteer group, with members representing a broad spectrum of the community. The CAC also has members on the Policy and Technical committees.

The Policy, Technical Advisory, and Citizen's Advisory meetings are always open to the public and citizen participation is encouraged.

(See page 8 for meeting locations and times.)



ORGANIZATIONAL CHART FOR THE BLOOMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION



What Does the MPO Do?

The Bloomington/Monroe County MPO provides coordinated transportation planning services for the Bloomington urban area. This encompasses a wide range of activities in order to provide for a variety of efficient and safe transportation options. Examples include:

- Preparing plans for future transportation improvements such as roadway improvements, expanding public transit systems, and developing bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- Coordinating the transportation planning activities of the City of Bloomington, Monroe County, the Town of Ellettsville, and the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) within Monroe County, as well as City and Indiana University transit providers.
- Maintaining a multi-faceted, transparent public participation process including a website, newsletter, and regular public meetings.



How is the MPO Funded?

The MPO must budget available federal, state, and local funds for projects within a 3 year time frame. The City of Bloomington provides the initial project funds, and 80% of these expenses are then reimbursed by State and Federal sources. These available project funds must be identified within the 3-year transportation plan, also known as the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Making Transportation Planning Happen

MPO Transportation Planning Documents

The MPO transportation planning documents guide the planning and the budgeting of funds for the MPO. The following documents are an important part of the transportation planning process.

The Long Range Transportation Plan

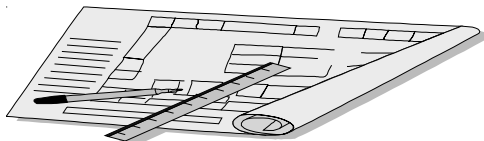
A long-range comprehensive transportation plan for Bloomington and Monroe County. This document outlines the MPO study area, the area that the MPO has predicted to become a part of the urbanized area by the forecast year. The projects discussed in this plan provide a guideline for future transportation investments over a 25-year horizon. These projects include (but are not limited to) major roadways, transit, and other intermodal facilities. This plan is reviewed and updated every 3 to 5 years.

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

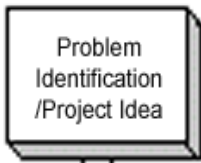
A short-term document covering 3 fiscal years. It identifies available project funding and allocates funds for prioritized projects in each of the 3 years. All of the projects in the TIP must be identified in the Long Range Transportation Plan. The TIP is also financially constrained - it can only include projects for which funding is available.

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

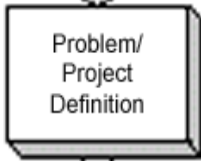
The UPWP guides the MPO and describes all planning activities that are anticipated in the Bloomington urban area over the next programming year. It also documents the work that will be performed with federal planning money. It shows which agencies will do studies, when work will be completed, and what the final product will be. The UPWP is updated annually.



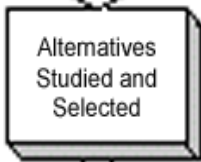
How Does the Transportation Planning Process Work?



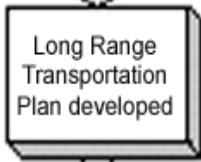
The process starts when a transportation problem (i.e. traffic congestion) or new idea (i.e. a new bike trail) is brought forward. This step includes the MPO, citizen groups, and elected officials.



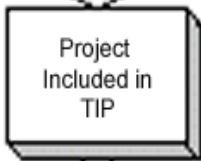
The MPO discusses the project idea in order to develop a purpose and needs statement. This statement addresses questions such as why is a new lane needed on this road? Is there a need for a new bike path?



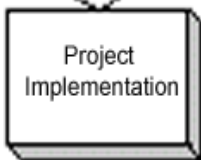
The idea is studied by the MPO where alternatives are explored (what is the best route for the new street or bike path?). Then working with the community stakeholders and the public, the MPO selects a preferred alternative for implementation.



After local and regional consensus is reached on the best alternative for the project, it is included and prioritized in the Long Range Transportation Plan.

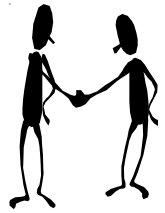


Once it is part of the Long Range Transportation Plan, it is eligible for inclusion and prioritization in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).



Once the MPO votes to include the project in the TIP for funding, the documents must gain the approval of state and federal transportation agencies. After these approvals, it is then added to the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

Getting Involved



Ways to Get Involved in the Decision Making Process

The Bloomington/Monroe County MPO believes that effective planning can only take place with input from you, the citizens. This is why the MPO is committed to a planning process that is as open to the public and as transparent as possible. A Public Involvement Process has been developed for the MPO that creates a framework and sets goals for involving the public which can be found on the MPO website

(<http://www.city.bloomington.in.us/planning/mpo/envirojustice/ejindex.html>).

Come to any of the Advisory Board Meetings

Technical Advisory Meetings are held the second Friday of each month, at 1:00 p.m. in the McCloskey Conference Room, City Hall. The Policy and Technical Advisory Committees also hold quarterly joint meetings at the same time.

Citizen's Advisory Committee meetings are held the fourth Wednesday of each month, at 6:30 p.m. in the McCloskey Conference Room .

Check out the MPO website

An MPO website (<http://www.city.bloomington.in.us/planning/mpo/>) has been developed with all of the transportation documents available, as well as schedules, agendas, and minutes for the Policy, Technical, and Citizen's Advisory committees.

Take part in a workshop

The MPO will also conduct workshops and public meetings as necessary to discuss the development or updates of the Transportation Improvement Plan, the Long Range Transportation Program, and the Unified Planning Work Program.

Public Notice

The Bloomington/Monroe County MPO is committed to providing complete information, timely notification, and full public access to key decisions.

Check these resources regularly for transportation planning information:

- Local Newspapers* - The Herald Times (*On the Agenda* section)
- The Indiana Daily Student
- Local Radio Public Service Announcements (as needed)
- B97
- WHFB
- WFIU
- Community Access Television (as needed) - B-CATS
- MPO information is also posted at the Bloomington and Ellettsville branches of the Monroe County Library *

**All committee and public meeting/workshop information will be announced in these media outlets.*

Reviewing transportation documents is an essential component of the public involvement process. Through workshops and meetings, the public will have 30 days to comment during the development and updates of the TIP, Long Range Transportation Plan, and UPWP.

If citizens will be directly affected by a project, they will be notified by certified mail. Meetings will also be scheduled in the affected communities.



Making Your Voice Heard

Visit the Bloomington/Monroe County MPO
(within the City of Bloomington Planning Department)
Showers Center City Hall, Suite 160, 401 N. Morton St.

Mailing address:

Long Range/ Transportation Planning Manager
City of Bloomington Planning Department
Showers Center City Hall, Suite 160
P.O. Box 100
401 N. Morton St.
Bloomington, IN 47402

Phone: (812) 349-3423

Fax: (812) 349-3535

E-mail: planning@city.bloomington.in.us



Other Agencies

Indiana Department of Transportation - Seymour District

Address: 185 Agrico Lane Seymour, IN 47274

Phone: (812) 522-5649

Fax: (812) 522-7658

Bloomington/ Monroe County Urban Area at a Glance

Census 2000 Information

The City of Bloomington is Indiana's 7th largest city. With a population of 69,291, it is also the largest city in Monroe County with 75% of the County's population.

Ellettsville is the second largest community in Monroe County with an estimated population of 5,078.

Monroe County is also experiencing growth - its population was estimated at 116,176 for 1996 and has climbed to 120,563 in 2000.
(Source: Census 2000 online data)



Area Transportation Trends

The Monroe County road network is made up of approximately 969 miles of state/county highways, rural roads and city streets.

The car is the primary mode of transportation in the area (37% of Monroe County households have more than one).

The Bloomington MPO area has 3 mass transit providers (Bloomington Transit, Indiana University Campus Bus, and Rural Transit) that 3% of the working population and a large percentage of Indiana University students use daily.

With the Alternative Transportation/Greenways System Plan, bicycling and walking are encouraged - Bloomington has 8 miles of bicycle lanes, 243 miles of sidewalks and 8 miles of multi-use trails.

(Source: Census Transportation Planning Package 2000)

Transportation Resources

Phone Numbers, Websites, Addresses

Bus services

Bloomington Transit

Provides bus transportation throughout the City of Bloomington.

Also has Paratransit services (BT Access)

(812) 336-RIDE (7433)

www.bloomingtontransit.com/



Rural Transit

Serving Monroe and Owen counties

Monroe County (812) 876-1079

Owen County: (812) 829-6066

Toll Free in Indiana: 1-800-844-1010

<http://www.area10.bloomington.in.us/ruraltransit/>

Indiana University Campus Bus

Provides bus transportation around the IU Bloomington campus

(812)855-8384

<http://www.iubus.indiana.edu/>

Bicycle resources

Bloomington Bicycle Club

Bloomington, IN

<http://www.bloomington.in.us/~bbc/>

Community Bike Project

contacts:

Rusty Peterson 333-4142

Steve Grimes 335-8192

Gina Weir 323-9870

Phone: (812) 332-9870

www.bloomington.in.us/~bikeproj



Guide to Acronyms

CAC	Citizen's Advisory Committee
EJ	Environmental Justice
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
HPMS	Highway Performance Monitoring System
INDOT	Indiana Department of Transportation
INSTIP	Indiana State Transportation Improvement Program
MCCSC	Monroe County Community School Corporation
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
PC	Policy Committee
ROW	Right-of-Way
STIP	Statewide Transportation Improvement Program
STP	Surface Transportation Program
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
TEA 21	Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
TIS	Traffic Impact Study
UPWP	Unified Planning Work Program



City of Bloomington Planning Department
Showers Center City Hall, 401 N. Morton St.
Bloomington, IN 47402